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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF A SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

NECESSITY OF ENDING THE ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL AND FINANCIAL EMBARGO IMPOSED BY THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AGAINST CUBA

Letter dated 10 September 1991 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I am pleased to transmit to you a letter from Bishop Joel E. Ajo Fernández of the Methodist Church of Cuba, the text and annexes of which concern the economic embargo imposed against Cuba by the United States. I feel that they should be brought to the attention of the representatives of Member States (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a General Assembly document.

(Signed) Ricardo ALARCON de QUESADA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 30 August 1991 from the Bishop of the Methodist Church of Cuba addressed to the Secretary-General

We were pleased and heartened to hear that the representative of our people and Government to the United Nations, H.E. Mr. Ricardo Alarcón, will request the General Assembly of that Organization, over which you preside, to include an item on the embargo against Cuba and the total elimination thereof.

We are writing to you to inform you of the declaration made by the Methodist Church of Cuba at its latest Annual Conference, held from 12 to 16 June 1991 (appendix I).

For your information, we are also enclsoing copies of the declarations issued by the College of Bishops of the Methodist Church of Latin America at its latest meeting, held in Antigua, Guatemala, on 15 August 1991 (appendix II) and by the Meeting of the Methodist Churches of Latin America, the Caribbean, the United States of America, Canada and England, held in Antigua, Guatemala from 10 to 17 August 1991 (appendix III).

We pray that the prophetic voices echoing in both the North and the South may be heard in the United Nations General Assembly, so that truth and justice may triumph and our Cuban people may shape their destiny without interference, embargoes or impositions of any type.

We take this opportunity to convey to you the renewed assurances of our highest consideration and we pray that God may guide you in your mission.

APPENDIX I

Statement of the position of the Methodist Church with respect to the blockade against Cuba

(Havana, 15 June 1991)

The Assembly of the Annual Conference of the Methodist Church of Cuba, meeting at the premises located at 25 and K, Vedado, Havana, from 12 to 16 June 1991, and having been consulted on the question of the commercial blockade against Cuba, has resolved to issue the following declaration expressing its position in principle with regard to this matter. Jesus Christ was sacrificed on the cross to redeem and save man from his sinful condition and to raise him to the full stature of a human being. The Methodist Church of Cuba advocates the total elimination of the North American trade embargo against our country.

The reasons for our rejection of the blockade are as follows:

(1) The blockade has a degrading effect on the people of our country, since it denies them the possibility of survival, health and development.

(2) Its affects children, the elderly and society as a whole, which is being subjected to economic strangulation.

(3) Our Methodist social doctrine holds that any act which tends to reduce man to a subhuman condition is an act against the Creator.

APPENDIX II

Declaration issued by the Council of Bishops and Heads of Churches of the Council of Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean

Solidarity with the Republic of Cuba

WHEREAS:

1. The economic marginality of Latin America is a sign of repression;

2. The economic blockade of Cuba, led by the United States, is a cruel means of causing death;

3. The Methodist Church of Cuba is committed to the struggle to suspend the economic blockade;

4. As Methodist Evangelical Churches, we form a united continental ecclesiastical body, and solidarity is built through concrete action;

5. The General Conference of the United Methodist Church of the United States has voted in favour of the request to lift the blockade;

The Council of Bishops and Heads of Churches of the Council of Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean resolves:

I. To pledge to fight, through the efforts of its national churches at various levels, to secure the lifting of the economic blockade against Cuba;

II. To propose that the Council of Methodist Churches in Latin America, as the continental ecumenical body, make a similar pledge, to support the Methodist Church of Cuba in its efforts to secure the lifting of the economic blockade against Cuba;

III. To submit this proposal for cooperation to the Methodist Church of Cuba for its information;

IV. To invite the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church, the United States Board of International Ministries and the United Church of Canada to join in this effort;

V. To affirm and defend the sovereign right of the Cuban people to decide their own destiny without foreign interference.

Document approved in special session by the Council of Bishops, done at Antigua, Guatemala, on 15 August 1991.

(Signed) Secundino MORALES
Secretary

(Signed) Raul RUIZ AVILA
Vice-President

(Signed) Aldo M. ETCHEPOYEN
President

APPENDIX III

Public Declaration of the Meeting of Methodist Churches

(Antigua, Guatemala, 16 August 1991)

On 14 August 1991, in Antigua, Guatemala, the Council of Bishops of the Council of Methodist Churches in Latin America and the Caribbean signed a declaration in support of the people of Cuba.

In solidarity with the Cuban people, and endorsing the terms of the above-mentioned declaration, the Meeting of Methodist Churches held in Antigua, Guatemala

CALLS FOR:

1. An end to the unjust and prolonged blockade against Cuba, promoted by the United States of America, which is affecting the lives of our Cuban brothers.

2. The support of all the countries of the Americas and the Caribbean for the people of Cuba, so that they may freely and wisely determine their destiny, without pressure or threats of intervention.

Bishop Aldo ETCHEGOYEN
Council of Methodist Churches in
Latin America and the Caribbean

Rev. C. Evans BAILEY
Methodist Church in the Caribbean
and the Americas

Bishop Melvin TALVERT
United Methodist Church
of the United States

Mrs. Rosemary WASS
Methodist Church of
Great Britain

Rev. Tom EDMONDS
United Church of Canada